

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-5042

1. Name

Historic 604 – 608 Eislen Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 604 – 608 Eislen Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check One

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check One

☒ original site
☐ moved:
date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This group of three three-story, two-bay wide early Italianate-style brick houses with shed roofs and brick cornices were built c. 1870. The houses retain their original brick facades, which were always painted. Most of the first floor level of 904-906 has been converted into a garage. The houses were probably originally built as tenements in this working class neighborhood. Only a few such buildings exist today in Fells Point and southwest Baltimore.

The houses are three stories in height, 604-606 are 11'2" wide, 608 is 13'6" wide and they occupy lots 52' deep. Each house is three small rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the rear corner of the house. The shed roofs are capped by a brick cornice consisting of two upper rows of slightly projecting stretcher bricks set above a deep frieze area decorated with brick modillions. At 608 Eislén St. these consist of two header bricks set against the plain frieze area; at 604-606 the decorative brickwork consists of two rows of progressively recessed stretcher bricks framed by three rows of slightly projecting, but also progressively recessed header bricks.

At 904-906 the tall, narrow window and door openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, with plain tympanums, and wood sills. At 908 the openings have no lintels and brick sills. No original sash survive. At 904-906 the windows are filled with 6/6 replacement sash; at 908, with 1/1 replacement sash. Doorways have single-light transoms and both entrances have a modern six-panel replacement door. The houses sit on low basements, lit by a small sash. 904-906 were reached by two or three steps (now a single set of wooden steps at 906). 908 is entered directly from the street.

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3. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	X	community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/>	conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	X <input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	X <input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/>	engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
X <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/>	invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify

Specific dates c. 1870

Builder/Architect

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses are significant as probably representing an experimental form of tenement housing that was only built in small numbers in Fells Point and southwest Baltimore. They were built to provide inexpensive housing for the working class residents of the area, most of whom were German or Irish at the time of construction. The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the middle and late nineteenth century. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and north-east and southwest of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell \$1,000 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$600 - \$800. Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the \$8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

The houses are especially significant because of their proximity to the Baltimore & Ohio railroad yards, the nation's first railroad, and its related railroad-oriented industries, like car and rail shops. Housing of this type was built to provide inexpensive housing for the wide variety of both Irish and German immigrants who came to southwest Baltimore to work in railroad-related industries in the decade before the Civil War.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023

W. LOME

B-5042

604-608 E. L. Ave.

BALTO. MD

UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL

EDISON
ILLUMINATING
CO.

A. Busch
BEEF AGENCY

BOX FACTORY

CRANE

NORTH BROS.
STAINING
CLOTHING

Harry
Sartorius
CLOTHING

PORTLAND

ST. 60

AVE.

S. PACA

CAMD

HAW

ST. 685

FURNITURE
MFG.

ST.

WARREN

ST. 686

ST.

LAND 853

ST. Carroll

S. PACA

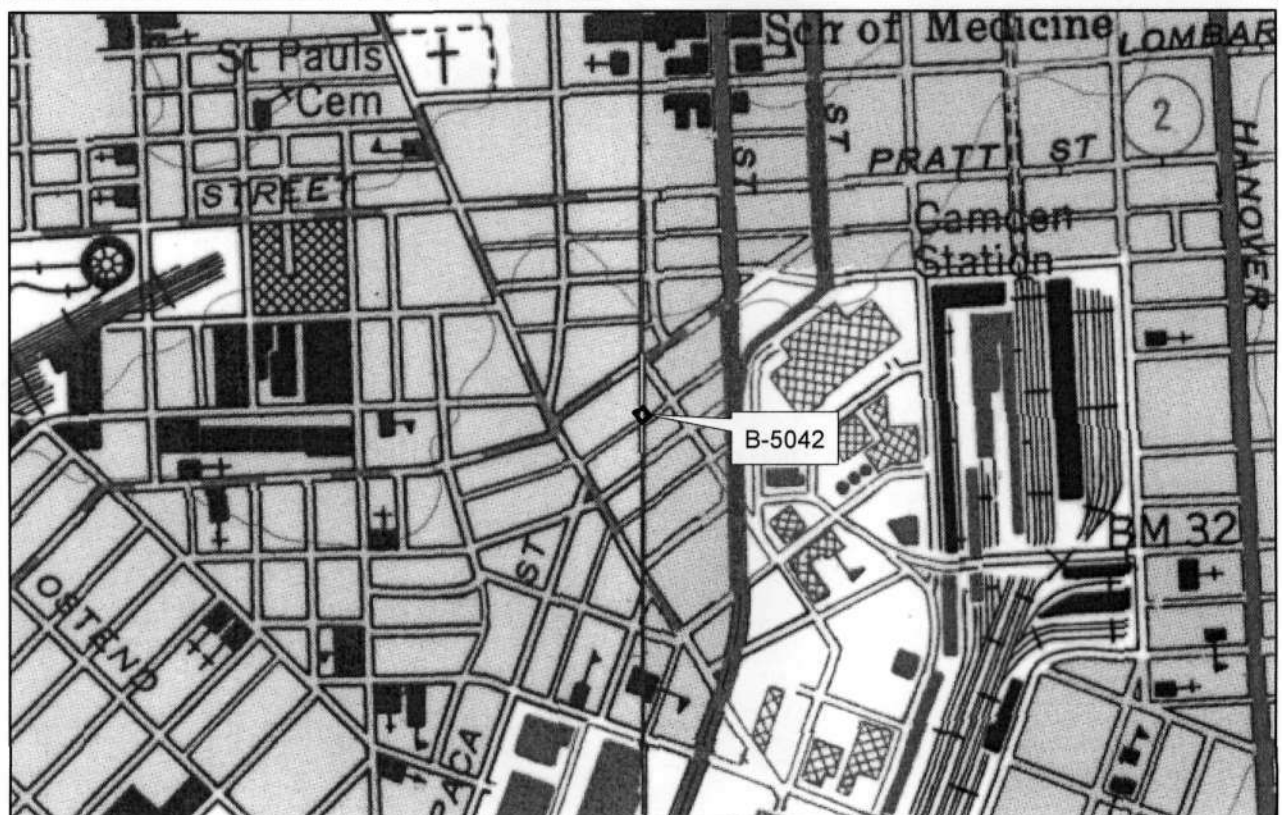
W. CONWAY

WAYNE

S.B. Sexton
STOVE WORKS

W. BARRE

B-5042
604-608 Eislen Street
Block 0854 Lots 051-053
Baltimore City
Baltimore East and Baltimore West Quad





604/610 Eisten

SWB-2

B-5042

604-610 Eisten St.

BActo MD

P. Belfiore

2/98

MD SHPO

1/3

604-610 Eisten St.
BActo MD
P. Belfiore
2/98
MD SHPO
1/3



608 Eisten

SWB-2

B-5042

604-610 Eisten St.

BALTO. HL

C. Belfrage

2/98

2/3

ED40843 0213 N N N 12



610 Gistlen

SWB-2

B-5042

604-610 Gistlen St.

BAITO, MD

C. Belfrage

2/98

3/3

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